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## The First Special Issue of Dignity

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## Keywords

editorial, special issue, sexual exploitation, sexploitation, sex trafficking, pornography, directory of open access journals, law, legislative, policy, United States, federal, democratization, academic journal, peer-review

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## Acknowledgements

I thank Lisa L. Thompson, the co-editor of this special issue of Dignity, for her time, expertise, and perseverance in getting Freedom from Sexploitation completed so quickly.

## THE FIRST SPECIAL ISSUE OF DIGNITY

Donna M. Hughes

*Editor-in-Chief*

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Welcome to the first special issue of *Dignity*.

**W***Freedom from Sexploitation (Dignity, Vol 2, Issue 3)* is co-edited by Lisa L. Thompson, the vice-president for education and outreach at the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, and myself, Donna M. Hughes, editor-in-chief of *Dignity*.

The 12 articles and videos in this special issue are from presentations made at a national briefing held on March 20, 2017, at the U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC. The event was organized by the National Center on Sexual Exploitation.

The articles on types of sexual exploitation, such as pornography and sex trafficking, and their connectivity were presented by academic scholars, lawyers, service providers, and community advocates. They address how these forms of exploitation can be combatted through new U.S. federal policies and legislation. The final article in this special issue is a set of law and policy recommendations for federal legislators and policy makers.

Videos are a new feature in this issue of *Dignity*. Streaming videos of the paper presentations at the briefing are available on the title page of each article on the Dignity site (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity>). Links to the videos are also included on the article's cover page.

In the future, I hope to include more videos of presentations, performances, and interviews. Videos may be used to introduce the content of papers and the author(s) of the article. The videos may also illustrate research methods and findings, and provide background context for the article. If you have an idea for how video could be used to document experiences, programs, services, or research, please contact me at [dignityjournal@gmail.com](mailto:dignityjournal@gmail.com).

Another milestone for *Dignity* is its acceptance and indexing in the Directory of Open Access Journals (<https://doaj.org/>). For inclusion in the directory, a journal must meet high professional standards for quality, transparency, open access, and peer-review. It is an important professional credential that will enable *Dignity* to apply for further indexing and abstracting of its content.

We've accomplished a lot in the first four issues of *Dignity*. Each issue has broken new ground with features, content, and new insights and findings. Our original

system of acknowledged peer review has attracted attention. This month (July 17, 2017), I contributed to a *Scholastica* examination of democratizing academic journals with a focus on peer-reviewed journals. “*Dignity: A Self-Starter Scholarly Journal Story*” is published here (<http://blog.scholasticahq.com/post/dignity-self-starter-journal/>).

Shortly after this special issue of *Dignity*, we will start publishing the next regular issue (Vol 2, Issue 4). We have interesting and insightful articles, interviews, and reviews in the final stages of editing.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Donna M. Hughes, Ph.D. (<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6563-2573>) holds the Eleanor M. and Oscar M. Carlson Endowed Chair in Women’s Studies at the University of Rhode Island. She is a Professor in the Gender and Women’s Studies Program and Sociology and Anthropology Department. She has worked for the last 30 years to combat all forms of violence against women and girls through teaching, research, and advocacy. She is the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of the open access, peer-reviewed scholarly journal *Dignity: A Journal on Sexual Exploitation and Violence*. She has been honored with the following recognition for her community activism and advocacy: the Josephine Butler Award (one of the Norma Hotaling Awards) for “challenging the status quo and creating new abolitionist policy approach to sex trafficking in the United States” (2010), and the Alice Paul Award for Women Who Have Worked to Confront Men’s Violence against Women (2017). She has also won the following academic awards: The College of Arts and Sciences Award for Research Excellence Award (2017), the University of Rhode Island Research Council Annual Research Award (2010), and the Outstanding Outreach Award for International Networking on Trafficking in Women, Vice Provost’s Office on Research and Graduate Studies, the University of Rhode Island (2002).

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